



**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES  
DEPARTMENT OF AUDITOR-CONTROLLER**

KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION  
500 WEST TEMPLE STREET, ROOM 525  
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012-3873  
PHONE: (213) 974-8301 FAX: (213) 626-5427

WENDY L. WATANABE  
AUDITOR-CONTROLLER

MARIA M. OMS  
CHIEF DEPUTY

ASST. AUDITOR-CONTROLLERS

ROBERT A. DAVIS  
JOHN NAIMO  
JUDI E. THOMAS

January 26, 2011

TO: Audit Committee

FROM: Wendy L. Watanabe  
Auditor-Controller

SUBJECT: **SUNSET REVIEW FOR THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY COMMUNITY  
ACTION BOARD**

**RECOMMENDATION**

The Audit Committee recommend to the Board of Supervisors (Board) to extend the Los Angeles County Community Action Board's sunset review date to September 30, 2015.

**BACKGROUND**

The Los Angeles County Community Action Board (CAB or Commission) was established by the Board on December 18, 1979. The Board approved the most recent extension in February 2003.

The CAB is federally mandated to provide oversight for implementation of various low-income social service programs funded by the Community Service Block Grant (CSBG) allocation. The CAB also serves as the advisory body to the Board for CSBG programs. Los Angeles County (County), as a State recognized local Community Action Agency, administers CSBG programs.

Duties of the CAB include:

- Establishing processes to allocate CSBG funds available to the County, holding public hearings regarding the use of the funds and submitting recommendations to the Board.
- Reviewing policies on program monitoring, staff assistance and accountability of the County, and recommending policy changes to the Board.

- Supervising the administration of all CSBG policies, standards and Board-adopted programs.
- Participating in the development and implementation of all programs and projects designed to serve low-income communities.
- Enabling low-income communities and residents to influence the programs affecting their interests, participating in the planning and implementation of those programs, and being a mechanism for securing broad community involvement in the programs.

The CAB meets monthly and has 15 members, appointed as follows:

- Five representatives from the public sector (Board-appointed).
- Five representatives from the private sector (selected by the CAB membership from a list of organizations representing the community).
- Five low income residents (selected by the CAB membership, one from each Supervisorial District).

CAB members serve without compensation. However, members may receive reimbursement for travel and other expenses incurred for official business. The Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) estimates that they spend approximately \$92,300 per year for Commission staff support, supplies and travel/expense reimbursements.

### **JUSTIFICATION**

Between January 2007 and December 2009, the CAB met 35 times (approximately 12 times per year) with an average attendance of 8.6 (57%) members. The Commission indicated that the low average attendance is due to a number of unfilled vacancies, and the Commissioners are actively working to address this issue. We noted that, although the Commission's average attendance was low, the CAB successfully fulfilled its duties.

During this review period, the Commission's major accomplishments included the following:

- Conducted public hearings in each Supervisorial District to gather community input on programs and services that low-income individuals and families need to attain the skills, knowledge and motivation necessary to achieve self-sufficiency. The results were incorporated in the 2008-09 and 2010-11 CSBG Community Action Plans, which are State-mandated, and used to assess low-income residents' needs, resources and goals in the service area.

- Reviewed the Request for Proposals for CSBG program contracts and provided comments.
- Reviewed and approved a methodology for DPSS to allocate CSBG funds to contractors.
- Reviewed the criteria for evaluating and selecting CSBG agencies/services.
- Researched funding distributions and governance in other Community Action Agencies' (e.g., City of Los Angeles, Riverside County, etc.), and determined that the County's distribution methodology and governance are appropriate.
- Recommended that the County partner with a Community Action Agency trade association to share information on CSBG American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) programs available to assist low-income individuals and families achieve self-reliance and attain financial self-sufficiency.
- Submitted quarterly reports to the Board of all CAB-approved actions, including CSBG program contract extensions, CSBG Community Action Plans and ARRA Local Plan approvals, and Commission membership changes.

The Commission's objectives for the next review period are to continue to:

- Work with DPSS to improve the CSBG request for proposal process (e.g., revising contract payment provisions to focus on outcomes, ensuring service delivery is focused on all of a client's needs, etc.).
- Implement the CAB's Strategic Plan goals referenced in the 2010-11 CSBG Community Action Plan, which include increasing the public's awareness of the County, meeting national service goals, developing additional funding resources and improving CAB member/staff relations.
- Conduct public hearings and community needs assessments to ascertain the needs of low-income residents in the County.

Please call me if you have any questions, or your staff may contact Jim Schneiderman at (213) 253-0101.

WLW:MMO:JLS:RGC:TK

#### Attachments

- c: Philip Browning, Director, Department of Public Social Services  
Alfred Samulon, Chair, Community Action Board  
Robin A. Guerrero, Chief, Board Operations  
Angie Montes, Acting Chief, Commission Services

**COMMISSION SUNSET REVIEW**  
**LOS ANGELES COUNTY COMMUNITY ACTION BOARD**  
**REVIEW COMMENTS**

**Mission.** (Does the mission statement agree with the Board of Supervisors' purpose and expectations?)

Stated mission is as set forth in the ordinance establishing the Commission.

**CONCUR**

**Section 1. Relevance.** (Is the mission still relevant and in agreement with the Board of Supervisors' purpose and expectations?)

The CAB's mission is to assist low-income residents in becoming self-sufficient, alleviate challenges and address underlying causes through community action and advocacy.

The Commission's mission appears to be **RELEVANT**.

**Section 2. Meetings and Attendance.** (Are required meetings held and is attendance satisfactory?)

The CAB meets monthly. Between January 2007 and December 2009, the CAB met 35 times (approximately 12 times per year) with an average attendance of 8.6 (57%) members. The Commission indicates that the low average attendance is due to a number of unfilled vacancies, and the Commissioners are actively working to address this issue. We noted that, although the Commission's average attendance was low, the CAB successfully fulfilled its duties.

Although the Commission's meeting frequency is **SATISFACTORY**, the Commission's attendance is **UNSATISFACTORY**.

**Sections 3 and 4. Accomplishments and Results.** (Are listed accomplishments and results significant?)

During this review period, the Commission's major accomplishments included the following:

- Conducted public hearings in each Supervisorial District to gather community input on programs and services that low-income individuals and families need to attain the skills, knowledge and motivation necessary to achieve self-sufficiency. The results were incorporated in the 2008-09 and 2010-11 CSBG Community Action Plans, which are State-mandated and used to assess low-income residents' needs, resources and goals in the service area.

- Reviewed the Request for Proposals for CSBG program contracts and provided comments.
- Reviewed and approved a methodology for DPSS to allocate CSBG funds to contractors.
- Reviewed the criteria for evaluating and selecting CSBG agencies/services.
- Researched funding distributions and governance in other Community Action Agencies' (e.g., City of Los Angeles, Riverside County, etc.), and determined that the County's distribution methodology and governance are appropriate.
- Recommended that the County partner with a Community Action Agency trade association to share information on CSBG ARRA programs available to assist low-income individuals and families achieve self-reliance and attain financial self-sufficiency.
- Submitted quarterly reports to the Board of all CAB-approved actions, including CSBG program contract extensions, CSBG Community Action Plans and ARRA Local Plan approvals, and Commission membership changes.

The Commission's accomplishments and results are **SIGNIFICANT**.

**Section 5. Objectives.** (Are the objectives compatible with the mission and goals and relevant within the current County environment?)

The Commission's objectives for the next review period are to continue to:

- Work with DPSS to improve the CSBG request for proposal process (e.g., revising contract payment provisions to focus on outcomes, ensuring service delivery is focused on all of a client's needs, etc.).
- Implement the CAB's Strategic Plan goals referenced in the 2010-11 CSBG Community Action Plan, which include increasing the public's awareness of the County, meeting national service goals, developing additional funding resources and improving CAB member/staff relations.
- Conduct public hearings and community needs assessments to ascertain the needs of low-income residents in the County.

The Commission's future objectives appear **RELEVANT**.

**Section 6. Resources.** (Are the resources utilized by the entity in support of the entity's activities warranted in terms of the accomplishments and results?)

CAB members serve without compensation. However, members may receive reimbursement for travel and other expenses incurred for official business. DPSS estimates that they spend approximately \$92,300 per year for Commission staff support, supplies and travel/expense reimbursements.

The Commission's expenses appear to be WARRANTED.

**Section 7. Recommendation.**

**EXTEND THE SUNSET REVIEW DATE FOR THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY  
COMMUNITY ACTION BOARD TO SEPTEMBER 30, 2015.**

## Los Angeles County Community Action Board Attendance Record

Commissioner	Nominated by:	3/31/07	6/30/07	9/30/07	12/31/07	3/31/08	6/30/08	9/30/08	12/31/08	3/31/09	6/30/09	9/30/09	12/31/09	Totals	% Attended	
Number of Meetings per Quarter		3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	35		
Roselyn Ibanez	1st District	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	3	3	2	2	2	26	74%	(1)
Robin Billups	2nd District						1	0	0	1				2	18%	
Vacant	2nd District	0	0	0	0	0					0	0	0	0	0%	
Susan Yackley	3rd District	3	2	3	2	3	3	2	3	3	2	3	2	31	89%	
Joseph C. Sherwood	4th District										2	2	1	5	63%	
Stan Klecha	4th District	3	2	3	2	3	3	2						18	90%	(1)
Vacant	4th District								0	0				0	0%	
David Hall	5th District	3	3	3	2	2	0	2	3	2	2	2	2	26	74%	
Alfred Samulon	Community Action Board				3	3	2	2	3	3	3	3	2	24	92%	
Howard Li	Community Action Board			0	3	0	1	2	3	2	2	1	0	14	52%	(2)
James Hale	Community Action Board	0	0	0										0	0%	
Jennifer Evans	Community Action Board	1	1											2	50%	(3)
Lance A. Williams, Ph.D. (4)	Community Action Board							2	2	1	3	2	2	12	75%	(5)
Mike Sims	Community Action Board	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	0	0			23	79%	(1)
Scott Heydenfeldt (6)	Community Action Board							2	3	2	3	3	1	14	82%	
Stan Lee	Community Action Board	3	2	3	2	3	3	3						19	90%	
Tracie Weathers	Community Action Board	2	2	1	2	1	2	2	3	1	2	2	1	21	60%	
Jesús Hermosillo	Elected - 1st District			1	2	1	1	0						5	42%	(2) (1)
Vacant	Elected - 1st District	0	0						0	0	0	0	0	0	0%	
Alejandro Martinez	Elected - 2nd District											2	1	3	75%	(5)
Vacant	Elected - 2nd District	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0			0	0%	
Laurie Spivak	Elected - 3rd District	1	2	2	1	0	2	2	1	3	2	3	1	20	57%	
Amy Condit	Elected - 4th District					1	1	2	3	3	3	1	1	15	71%	(2)
Vacant	Elected - 4th District	0	0	0	0									0	0%	
Julie Lalwani (7)	Elected - 5th District									1	1	3	0	5	45%	
Tarik Ross	Elected - 5th District	2	3	3	3	1	1	1	2	2	1	3	1	23	66%	
Totals (8)		22	21	24	28	23	25	27	30	26	28	29	17	300		
Average Attendance per Meeting														8.6		

**Legend:**

Vacancy was filled or Commissioner did not serve during this period.

- (1) Commissioner resigned after Commission held two of three meetings in the last quarter of the Commissioner's term.
- (2) Commissioner appointed after Commission held two of three meetings in the first quarter of the Commissioner's term.
- (3) Commissioner resigned after Commission held one of three meetings in the last quarter of the Commissioner's term.
- (4) Commissioner served as an alternate member but later became an official member. Alternate member's attendance is included in the Average Attendance per Meeting when a Commissioner nominated by the Community Action Board is absent. As a result, only one of the two meetings in the 9/30/08 quarter and none of the two meetings in the 12/31/08 quarter were included in the meeting totals below.
- (5) Commissioner appointed after Commission held one of three meetings in the first quarter of the Commissioner's term.
- (6) Commissioner served as an alternate member but later became an official member. Alternate member's attendance is included in the Average Attendance per Meeting when a Commissioner nominated by the Community Action Board is absent. As a result, only one of the two meetings in the 9/30/08 quarter was included in the meeting total below.
- (7) Alternate member. Alternate member's attendance is included in the Average Attendance per Meeting when Commissioner Tarik Ross is absent. As a result, the one meeting in the 3/31/09 quarter and the three meetings in the 9/30/09 quarter were not included in the meeting totals below.
- (8) Meeting totals do not include alternate's attendance if the Commissioner who the alternate represents is present.